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ABSTRACT

Integrating a library skills curriculum requires that school library media programs be able to schedule instruction flexibly. Flexible scheduling describes a program in which the learning experiences of students are based on need rather than on routine weekly visits to the library media center for class instruction. To determine the factors that contribute to flexible scheduling and to find out what must be done to improve the chances of flexible scheduling, surveys were sent to elementary school library media specialists in the United States and Canada who had responded to Internet notices of the study. A literature review identified factors for study. Responses of 27 library media specialists indicated that the factors considered essential by media professionals in the literature were the same factors considered important by media specialists in the schools. Cooperative planning, however, although listed as a high priority, was not a regularly scheduled activity, usually because of time constraints. Recommendations are offered to improve the capacity for flexible scheduling of instruction. Thirteen tables present study findings, and a copy of the questionnaire is appended. (Contains 38 references.) (SLD)

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IMPLEMENTING AND MAINTAINING SUCCESSFUL FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAMS

A REPORT PRESENTED IN

LIBRARY MEDIA EDUCATION 635 (3)

MEDIA SERVICES I

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF SCIENCE AT

MANKATO STATE UNIVERSITY

MANKATO, MINNESOTA

BY

Marilyn K. Oswald

August, 1994

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This report is submitted as part of the required work in the course Library Media Education, 635 (3), Media Services I at Mankato State University and has been supervised, examined and accepted by the Professor.

Under the Alternate Plan for the Master of Science degree this report may be presented to the student's examining committee as a study offered in lieu of a thesis.

Professor Frances McDonald

(Signature)

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A special thanks to all the library media professionals who volunteered to participate in this study. Because of their visionary efforts to make flexible scheduling a reality, they have broken ground for others wanting to implement flexible scheduling for their programs. Continued efforts to share knowledge and experiences with other library media professionals will certainly increase the chances of flexible scheduling becoming a reality for everyone.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Today's school library media programs are influenced by the guidelines established in Information Power (1988). School library media specialists act as information specialists, teachers, and instructional consultants to ensure that students and teachers become effective users of ideas and information. In order to accomplish this, information skills of the library media program are best taught through integration with the school's curriculum. Information skills take on purpose and meaning. Students understand more clearly the connection between the skills taught and the need to use them. Students see a reason to learn and remember information skills and how to apply them in different ways for different purposes. The skills have become a means to an end, not an end in themselves.

Background Information

Curriculum integration of information skills is not a new phenomenon. National school library guidelines recommended curriculum integration as early as the 1960 publication of Standards for School Library Programs and continued to do so through the

current 1988 publication, Information Power (Kreiser & Hortin, 1992). In their 1984 publication, Standards for Quality Elementary Schools: Kindergarten Through Eighth Grade, the National Association of Elementary School Principals also recommended curriculum integration with a "total multimedia center" (Kreiser & Hortin, 1992, p. 316).

Curriculum integration of information skills requires the ability of the school library media program to schedule instruction flexibly. Flexible scheduling describes a program in which learning experiences of students are based on need rather than on routine weekly visits to the library media center for class instruction. According to Information Connections (MEMO, 1992), Minnesota's guidelines for school library media programs, "flexible scheduling of the media center is a must if information skills are to be taught when they are needed in the context of a classroom and/or inter-disciplinary activities" (p. 5).

Information Power (AASL & AECT, 1988), the national guidelines for school library media programs, stated that providing access to information is a specific objective of the school library media program and that access to the materials and staff of the library media center at the point of need is essential to meeting the information needs of students and teachers. "Any functions that

restrict or interfere with open access to all resources, including scheduled classes on a fixed basis, must be avoided to the fullest extent possible" (AASL & AECT, 1988, p. 28).

In support of Information Power, the American Association of School Librarians also published a position statement on flexible scheduling.

> The integrated library media program philosophy requires that an open schedule must be maintained. Classes cannot be scheduled in the library media center to provide teacher release or preparation time. Students and teachers must be able to come to the center throughout the day to use information sources, to read for pleasure, and to meet and work with other students and teachers. (AASL, 1991)

According to a study done by Loertscher, Ho, and Bowie (1987), library media specialists who had library media programs with flexible scheduling listed it as one of the services they provided for students and teachers of which they were most satisfied; and for library media specialists who did not have flexible scheduling, it was one service that they felt would be the most important addition to their programs.

Need for the Study

The demand for flexible scheduling within our school library media programs is quite evident. The concern for many educators, particularly elementary school library media specialists, is how to go

about implementing flexible scheduling so that true integration of information skills with the school's curriculum can become a reality.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to: (1) determine what factors contribute to implementing and maintaining successful flexible scheduling in elementary school library media programs; and (2) determine what can be done to improve the chances of flexible scheduling becoming a reality for all elementary schools.

Assumptions of the Study

It was assumed that all participants in this study: (1) were familiar with the national guidelines outlined in Information Power; (2) had experience as elementary school library media specialists; (3) were involved in some form of transition to flexible scheduling; (4) had integrated information skills with classroom curriculum; and (5) were knowledgeable of the terms *flexible scheduling, fixed scheduling,* and *cooperative planning,*

Limitations of the Study

Surveys for this study were sent to elementary library media professionals from the United States and Canada who responded to notices posted over LM_Net and MEMO-net via Internet asking for participants in a graduate research project (nonprobability sampling). Participants were limited to those elementary library

media specialists who indicated having been involved in implementing and continuing to maintain flexibly scheduled library media programs (self-selected sample). Several elementary library media specialists known to use flexible scheduling in the state of Minnesota were chosen for field testing the survey instrument (purposive sample).

The resources used for a review of the literature were limited to those found through the Mankato State University Memorial Library and its networking system.

Definition of Terms

Information Skills. Skills necessary for accessing, processing, and communicating information (Dalbotten, 1986).

Fixed Scheduling. A traditional method of scheduling classes in the library media center for isolated instruction with the library media specialist, usually on a weekly basis for a specified period of time (Donham van Deusen, 1993).

Flexible Scheduling. A method of scheduling which allows teachers to schedule lessons or activities for classes, small groups, or individuals at their time of need. Students and teachers have access to the resources of the library media center throughout the day (MEMO, 1992).

Partially Flexible Scheduling. A method of scheduling which combines characteristics of fixed and flexible scheduling (Huseby, 1989).

Teacher Prep Time. Contractual time provided for teachers to plan/prepare lessons without student contact. Also known as teacher release time or teacher planning time (Shafritz, 1988).

Cooperative Planning. Two or more educators who collaboratively plan and evaluate lessons for a group of students. Cooperative planning between library media specialists and classroom teachers involves the integration of information skills with the classroom curriculum (Buchanan, 1991).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There has been much discussion in the literature about the realities of flexible scheduling in library media centers across the United States and Canada. Library media specialists are finding the task quite challenging, but also rewarding. Many experienced library media professionals are beginning to provide evidence of the benefits of flexible scheduling and are offering suggestions to others who are starting or are thinking of starting flexible scheduling within their own school library media programs.

Flexible Scheduling

According to Buchanan (1991), the difference between a good library media program using flexible scheduling and an excellent one is organization and preparation. She argued that a flexibly scheduled program is not made by changing a few procedures in a traditional program, but by a complete change in attitude, resources, and management. All members of the school community must assume ownership of the program and ownership implies responsibilities. A flexibly scheduled library media program is a school wide program requiring commitment and understanding of the administration and

acceptance and support of the teachers, parents, and students. The library media specialist, however, must assume the leadership role for implementing flexible scheduling.

Program Development

Because planning and organization are so important to implementing successful flexible scheduling, Buchanan (1991) strongly advocated an initial stage called program development. During this stage, several things must be accomplished. First, a needs assessment must be conducted using teacher surveys and interviews to determine what services are wanted but cannot be provided because of current scheduling, staff size, and other factors. Also during this stage, the library media specialist must convince the administration of the need for flexible scheduling by demonstrating how a flexibly scheduled library media program enhances and extends the vision of the school and how it is better able to achieve that vision than the present program. Browning (1990) added that assessments done during this development stage are very helpful in determining the service needs of teachers and students and that the results can help the administration make a better informed decision. Browning suggested that the library media specialist compile all the information from books and professional journals about flexible scheduling he/she finds helpful into a folder and then create a

shorter overview for the principal. It is extremely important that the principal be well informed in order for the library media specialist to gain his/her support. The library media specialist must be able to provide solid answers to administrative concerns such as: 1) *How will teacher prep time be covered?* 2) *You are being paid as a teacher, shouldn't you be teaching like teacher?* and 3) *How will I explain to parents and the school board why students do not have library once each week?* Markuson (1988) pointed out that administrators are under pressure from teachers' unions to find teacher prep time. Those having a hard time finding it, may look to the library media program, particularly if the library media specialist is "still waiting for teachers to come to the library" (Markuson, 1988, p. 133). This lack of involvement by the library media specialist naturally leads administrators to believe that students are missing out on important skills. Other administrators, according to Markuson, simply feel more comfortable with everyone on the master schedule. Keeping these thoughts in mind, the library media specialist must clearly understand the importance of winning administrative support. Buchanan, along with many other professionals, insisted that without complete administrative support, flexible scheduling has little chance of surviving.

Buchanan (1991) also pointed out that it is extremely important to involve teachers in the program development stage to ensure that services respond to their needs, preferences, and priorities. Burton (1989) concurred. She advised that teachers need to be informed and involved well in advance of flexible scheduling's actual implementation. Dobrot and McCawley (1992) recommended holding informal discussions with key teachers from each grade level first. They advised choosing teachers who are articulate, supportive, and progressive, pointing out that these key teachers will make good allies when trying to gain acceptance for flexible scheduling among all the teachers. Barron (1988) advised library media specialists to "communicate actively and positively with all who will listen" (p. 49). Pick comfortable and convenient times for discussing the benefits of flexible scheduling and let teachers know you want feedback. Winn (1991) supported Roggenbuck's recommendation of initiating a demonstration project for teachers that would model the cooperative planning efforts of the library media specialist and a classroom teacher in jointly planning, teaching, and evaluating a unit of instruction. The success of the unit should provide "evidence that teachers and students profit from this kind of instructional partnership and that stronger instructional programs are built when

library media resources and services are integrated into the instructional program" (Winn, 1991, p. 8).

Re-education

Program development also involves re-education. Browning (1990), Burton (1989), and Magers (1986) advised that before any changes in scheduling can take place, the library media specialist must first start with changing the perceptions teachers and administrators have of the role of the library media specialist. It is important that teachers and administrators understand the roles of the library media specialist as information specialist, teacher, and instructional consultant. It is also important that they understand the interrelationship of these roles as they define what the library media specialist does. And finally, it is important that they understand how these roles influence the operations of the library media center in meeting the goals and objectives of the library media program. Barron (1993) reiterated Ireland's conclusion by quoting "the problem is not lack of proof of the need for inclusion of professional school library services in any effort to provide adequate education, but a pervasive lack of awareness of this proof" (p. 50). Barron added that neither teachers nor administrators nor school board members read the research, and therefore, do not have the

same perceptions of the role of the library media specialist as the library media specialist does. Browne and Burton (1989) suggested a public relations campaign which centers around Information Power and its message of fostering life-long learning. Buchanan (1991) stated that library media specialists need to evaluate their own attributes as library media specialists before attempting to implement change. Krimmelbein (1989) asserted that library media specialists need to challenge assumptions, and if need be, change their own self image in order to affect change. Library media specialists must be able to clearly define the purpose of the library media program and their role within the program in order to succeed in educating the school community.

Administrative Support

Strong administrative support was repeatedly listed as a necessary component for implementing and maintaining successful flexible scheduling (Browne, 1991; Browne & Burton, 1989; Browning, 1990; Buchanan, 1991; Burton, 1989; Dobrot & McCawley, 1992; Dugan, 1988; Kern, 1990; Loertscher, 1988; Magers, 1986; Mills, 1991; Palapala, 1989). Buchanan described the principal's role as one who articulates the vision of the school and the role of the library media program in that vision to the school community. The principal must make teachers aware of the expectations of and for

the library media program by: 1) recognizing and supporting teacher's efforts at cooperative planning; 2) providing time for cooperative planning, curriculum work, and staff development; 3) participating in library media activities him/herself; 4) making his/her expectations a factor in hiring new teachers; and 5) including those expectations as part of the teacher evaluation process. Loertscher concurred. The principal must create expectations of teachers and communicate those expectations through meetings, memos, newsletters, written policies, interviews, and teacher evaluations. Browne and Burton stated that strong administrative support must be steady and reliable since every problem or concern cannot be anticipated. They pointed out that when problems arise, administrators will be the first to hear about them and the first to have to deal with them, particularly with teachers who did not see anything wrong with the old system and wonder why changes were made in the first place. Browning remarked that principals must be able to explain to teachers the benefits of flexible scheduling and assist library media specialists with the curriculum objectives of the school. Buchanan added that the principal's commitment is also reflected in the budget for the library media program. He/She should seek ways to provide the resources and personnel necessary for a successful program. Loertscher stated that the principal needs

to understand the best mix of personnel for the library media staff to do its job and achieve "the best return for the money invested" (Loertscher, 1988, p. 50). According to Loertscher, anything less than one full time library media specialist and one full time clerk "impairs the central function of the library media program," which is resourced-based teaching and individualized assistance to students and teachers (p. 50).

Teacher Support

Winning teacher support is also vital to the success of flexible scheduling. Buchanan (1991) acknowledged that teachers need to be educated about the changes flexible scheduling will bring. She recommended focusing on changing attitudes first then changing practices. Browning (1990) pointed out that not every teacher is going to be excited about changing to flexible scheduling. Some will feel threatened by what they see as an intrusion on their instruction and almost all of them will feel that planning time is being taken away from them. They are used to being the only instructors in their classrooms and are not used to sharing that responsibility with anyone else. According to Browning, teachers tend to think about what they are losing rather than what they are gaining through flexible scheduling. Browne and Burton (1989) concurred. They explained that requiring teachers to revise their plans and/or change

their routines can be traumatic. They advised it was best to contact teachers individually or meet with them in small groups to answer questions, address concerns, and ease the transition. Burton (1989) also suggested that the best way to approach teachers when first planning flexible scheduling is to meet with them in small groups or team level meetings instead of the entire staff all at once. She insisted that it is vital to winning their support to take care of the "me" things first such as: 1) *How will flexible scheduling affect me and my schedule?* and 2) *What's expected of me in cooperative planning?* (Burton, 1989, p. 41). Huseby's (1989) findings also supported more personal approaches, indicating over eighty percent of the library media specialists surveyed preferred grade level meetings to inservices and staff meetings. Ninety percent preferred personal conferences when attempting to resolve individual concerns of teachers. Buchanan (1991) indicated that she preferred a combination of approaches, mediums, and methods when it came to staff development of flexible scheduling. She listed training sessions, sharing sessions, and one-to-one assistance. According to Buchanan, no matter what approach is used, staff development needs to be short, to-the-point, personal, and continual. She recognized that teachers need a series of sessions in which they have opportunities to discuss methods and try new techniques. Whatever approach,

professional development should include theory, demonstration, practice with feedback, and application with coaching if a change in practice is to be effective. Finnerty (1994) concurred. She stated that staff development must occur in a variety of formats, settings, and times. It is vital that teachers know the library media specialist's philosophy, the actual mechanics of flexible scheduling and how it will affect them, and how they can expect cooperative planning to work. According to Finnerty, teachers will want a clear picture of how they will plan, teach, and evaluate lessons with the library media specialist. It is very important to clarify what the teachers can expect from the library media specialist as well as what the library media specialist will be expecting from them.

Dobrot and McCawley (1992) reiterated the need for effective communication during this staff development stage. It is essential that teachers understand the importance and necessity of cooperative planning to a flexibly scheduled program. If not, the library media specialist may end up with "a rigid schedule under the guise of flexibility" as teachers continue to set up weekly scheduled visits which have only some "superficial connection" to the curriculum (Dobrot & McCawley, 1992, p. 21). Dobrot and McCawley warned library media specialists that just because the library media schedule will now be open and flexible, does not mean that

integration will naturally follow. It is extremely important that teachers understand the connection between cooperative planning and curriculum integration if flexible scheduling in library media programs is to be successful.

Curriculum Integration and Cooperative Planning

It is during staff development and individual/grade level meetings that the library media specialist demonstrates the benefits of curriculum integration of information skills and cooperative planning. Browne and Burton (1989) and Buchanan (1991) recommended developing a scope and sequence of information skills for one's own school. Buchanan suggested involving teachers in the development of the scope and sequence so that they know the information skills the students are expected to learn and are more willing to plan cooperatively. She stated that the library media specialist must emphasize that by pooling one's efforts through cooperative planning the curriculum becomes more manageable. Cooperative planning is not an additional burden for teachers to assume but rather an opportunity to have assistance in teaching their curriculum. Browne and Burton assured that if teachers understand how the information skills being taught coincide with the lessons they are teaching, they will accept flexible scheduling more readily. Dobrot and McCawley (1992) viewed cooperative planning

as a re-education opportunity in which the library media specialist and the classroom teachers gain extensive knowledge of each others' curriculum programs and responsibilities, and in the process, strengthen their cooperative efforts in providing the best possible learning experiences for students. Ohlrich (1992) revealed that when teachers realize that both they and the library media specialist stress the same content information with students, the classroom lessons come alive for them.

The library media specialist must know the curriculum and his/her own library media collection. Buchanan (1991) remarked that the library media specialist should make it a point to attend curriculum meetings. Loertscher (1988) contended that it was the principal's responsibility to make sure the library media specialist has the time and is expected to be a curriculum team member. Buchanan recommended that library media specialists have complete sets of teacher editions and guidelines used by all grades in the library media center professional library so that they can be used as references to review content for areas good for resourced-based teaching and the natural integration of information skills. Ohlrich (1992) recommended keeping cooperatively planned lessons on file for easy access. The files provide the library media specialist with immediate information about each lesson and allow the library

media specialist to make suggestions for the next lesson. Browne (1991) urged the library media specialist and the teacher to evaluate all cooperatively planned lessons. She maintained that it is during evaluation of the lesson that the library media specialist and the teacher work towards true collaboration. Ohlrich has found new teachers to be some of the strongest advocates of flexible scheduling. New teachers, in particular, appreciate suggestions of lessons already known to be successful in the past. By providing teachers with a high level of information, ideas, and services, teachers see the immediate benefits of cooperative planning and realize that they are receiving more than they are giving up.

Buchanan (1991) reported that it is essential for the success of flexible scheduling that planning occur on a regular basis during formally scheduled planning times. She recommended providing options for teachers and involving them in the planning schedule by letting them decide the time, length, how many times to meet (weekly, every two weeks, or monthly), and with whom to meet (one teacher or a whole grade level). Browning (1990), however, advocated planning time only as the need arose although she, too, remarked that cooperative planning was essential for a flexibly scheduled program to be successful. Buchanan recommended using monthly planning sheets completed by each classroom teacher that

list subject topics and special events that could be used for lessons in cooperative planning. Browning stated that a single planning form is best to use during cooperative planning sessions with teachers. It serves as a familiar tool when planning by providing focus for the meeting and providing the necessary background data for the lesson. Weisberg and Toor (1991) observed that once teachers accept flexible scheduling and realize its benefits, cooperative planning and classroom use of the library media center increases. Teachers begin thinking up ideas for joint projects and approaching the library media specialist instead of the other way around.

Communication

Communication is the key element in maintaining a positive attitude among teachers. Browne and Burton (1989) urged periodic evaluations to outline the successes and provide everyone with a needed "pat on the back" for a job well done (p. 23). Browning (1990) concurred. She concentrated on the efforts needed to plan successful lessons and keep teachers informed of what was going on in the library media center, in the hope of giving other teachers ideas for ways in which they, too, could better use the resources of the library media center. Buchanan (1991) recommended using every opportunity and strategy to maintain constant visibility of the library media program through newsletters, displays, conversation,

personal services, invitations to teachers to observe activities in the library media center, and announcements of new products and services.

Flexibility

Flexibility in planning was also mentioned as a component of success in flexible scheduling. Browne (1991) stated that everything needs to be flexible--the number of students, the length of class, the number of lessons, the time of day, the number of lessons in a week or the number of lessons in a day. Ohlrich (1992) suggested that the library media specialist pencil in his/her own time requirements such as planning time, administrative duties, and even lunch time. Teachers are then quite pleased if the library media specialist changes for them and are more ready to make changes for the library media specialist. Browning (1990) suggested that the library media specialist make time for the activities that always seem to get pushed aside. She commented that teachers and administrators need to know that the library media specialist has certain time requirements also. Burton (1989) added that the library media specialist should set time aside for administrative duties with teachers realizing classes can come to the library media center but that the library media specialist will not be available for help.

Transition

Recommendations varied about how, when, and with whom flexible scheduling should be implemented. Browne (1991) advocated a gradual method by using what she called "stepping stones" to make the move from fixed scheduling to flexible scheduling easier (p. 28). She recommended starting with integrating information skills with the classroom curriculum, demonstrating how students benefit from information skills being taught at the time of need. Browne and Burton (1989) indicated that library media specialists who already teach lessons that integrate information skills with the curriculum will have a smoother transition to flexible scheduling. Burton (1989) argued that the library media specialist can start integrating information skills at anytime, they just may not be allowed to teach the skills at a flexibly scheduled time. Browne (1991) and Magers (1986) recommended starting with one teacher and/or lesson and building on that. Browning (1990) concurred. She stated that library media specialists should start with teachers with whom they have had success and support in the past. This helps to assure a successful start knowing that mistakes can be made in a supportive and friendly environment. Browne added that the library media specialist should make sure information about successful lessons is passed on to the principal and

the other teachers to encourage further participation. Buchanan (1991) maintained that a few outstanding experiences are better than numerous mediocre ones.

Hughes (1990) suggested a transition to flexible scheduling by alternating weeks of open and scheduled classes with the open time devoted to activities initiated by the library media specialist, thus giving teachers time to become more comfortable and creative in utilizing the resources of the library media center and the expertise of the library media specialist. Buchanan (1991) recommended starting with school-wide themes such as seasons or special events, that way planning for the library media specialist would not be so overwhelming.

DiSanto (1989) advocated block scheduling as a transitional type of scheduling. In block scheduling, the library media specialist and the classroom teacher decide which curriculum units work best for integrating information skills designated for a particular grade level and then plan concentrated units of study to be taught during a specified block of time instead of the traditional weekly allotted time. According to DiSanto, block scheduling provides more open time in the library media center for other students and teachers since all classes will not be working on integrated units at the same time.

Weisberg and Toor (1991) observed success with flexible scheduling when it was done all at once instead of gradually throughout the year. Huseby (1989) found in her study that fifty-three percent of the library media specialists surveyed implemented flexible scheduling all at once while sixty-two percent would have preferred implementing gradually over one year if they had the chance to do it again. Buchanan (1991) recommended beginning a gradual implementation of flexible scheduling at the start of the school year rather than later when class schedules and routines would be changed or disrupted.

Partially Flexible Scheduling

Some professionals found a partially flexible schedule to work best for them. A partially flexible schedule consists of some fixed times for activities, two such activities being book circulation and library orientation. Burton (1989) recommended that kindergarten and first grade have a fixed time and come more frequently because they require a different preparation than the upper grades. Browning (1990) used twenty minute circulation times for grades three through five and thirty minutes with kindergarten through second grade, allowing the primary students time to work on building a foundation of literature-related experiences. Magers (1986) also recommended scheduling time for kindergarten and first

grade as a group once each week to introduce them to the library media center in a positive, nonthreatening manner. In Johnson's (1992) study, seventy-eight percent of teachers surveyed reported that elementary students need routinely scheduled times. Huseby (1989) found in her study that as high as seventy-five percent of the library media programs included in the survey had some degree of structured scheduling; only nine percent had no structured scheduling. Huseby also found that only sixty-three percent of the schools surveyed had all grades involved in flexible scheduling while the remaining schools surveyed reported that kindergarten through second grade were somewhat less involved than grades three through six.

Factors to Consider

Some of the literature addressed certain factors which should be considered before planning for flexible scheduling. Browne and Burton (1989) and Magers (1986) mentioned that the size of the school enrollment in relation to the number of professional and support personnel is an important consideration. According to Browne and Burton, a flexible schedule puts more demands on a staff than does the teaching of weekly scheduled classes. It is quite helpful if paid or volunteer staff are available to assist students and teachers so that routine clerical and warehouse tasks are covered

while the library media specialist increases planning/teaching time with teachers. McCain (1989) recognized the need for a full time aide, student aides, and dedicated and dependable parent volunteers who agree to work each week in the library media center so that the library media specialist has the time for integrated lessons. Loertscher, Ho, and Bowie (1987) found a statistically significant difference in service when elementary school library media staff sizes fell below one full-time professional and one full-time clerical person.

Browne and Burton (1989), Magers (1986), and McCain (1989) commented on the size, location, and available space of the library media center as other considerations. Space, arrangement, and scheduling must be able to accommodate several different groups/activities at the same time. However, based on her experiences, Buchanan (1991) contended that a flexibly scheduled library media program can be the program of choice regardless of facilities, materials, enrollment, or staff size. She maintained that the only condition that must be met is a library media specialist who is committed to flexible scheduling and is willing to work hard to achieve its success. If the library media specialist waits to begin a flexibly scheduled program when all conditions are ideal, the time will never arrive.

Developing an integrated library media program through flexible scheduling will take time. Browne and Burton (1989) attested to the fact that achieving a smoothly-running, flexibly-scheduled program would realistically take three to five years. The first year is the most difficult. Being able to maintain enthusiasm is essential. Despite the challenge, Huseby (1989) found that ninety-seven percent of the library media specialists surveyed liked flexible scheduling better than the traditional fixed scheduling and that ninety-six percent would implement flexible scheduling again.

Summary

Several important factors were identified by experienced library media professionals as essential to implementing and maintaining successful flexible scheduling in elementary school library media programs. Administrative commitment, teacher cooperation, effective communication, and strong leadership by the library media specialist encompass the most important elements in determining the degree of success elementary school library media programs will achieve with flexible scheduling.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted to determine what factors have contributed to implementing and maintaining successful flexible scheduling in elementary school library media programs already existing throughout the United States and Canada. Are these factors similar to those cited in the literature? Are there additional factors not cited in the literature which significantly contribute to implementing and maintaining successful flexible scheduling in school library media programs? What can be done to improve the chances of flexible scheduling becoming more of a reality for all elementary schools?

Sample

A nonprobability sampling was used in conducting this study. Specific criteria had to be identified and met in order for individuals to be included. Participants would be limited to those elementary library media specialists who had gone through the process of implementing flexible scheduling and have continued to maintain flexibly scheduled library media programs.

Participants in this study were from a self-selected sample. Surveys were sent to library media professionals who responded to notices posted over LM_Net and MEMO-net via Internet asking for participants in a graduate research project. Criteria for participating in the study was included in each notice posted. Two notices were posted. The second notice was posted five days after the first. One week beyond the deadline was allowed for gathering any late responses from individuals wishing to volunteer in the study. Thirty-seven surveys were sent by mail. The surveys were to be returned within a two week period from the time they were sent. One week beyond the deadline was allowed for late responses. Of the thirty-seven surveys sent, thirty-four surveys were returned. The response rate was ninety-two percent. Seven surveys, however, could not be used because the respondents and/or their situations did not fit the criteria previously described. For example, one respondent was working in a middle school, two respondents were interested in implementing flexible scheduling but had not yet done so, one respondent had flexible scheduling and then lost it, two respondents were working in elementary schools that had already implemented flexible scheduling before they came, and one survey arrived too late to be included. Therefore, the total number of

surveys used in this study was twenty-seven, or seventy-three percent.

Instrument

No existing survey instrument could be found that was appropriate for conducting this study, therefore, one was constructed. The items designed for the survey were based on a review of the literature and expert opinion. After the survey instrument was developed, a field test was conducted with three elementary library media specialists in the state of Minnesota known to have implemented flexible scheduling and continue to maintain flexibly scheduled library media programs.

Procedure

Data collected from the surveys was tallied and presented as percentages of the total number of respondents included in the study. This study is based on the results of twenty-seven surveys.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to determine what factors contribute to implementing and maintaining successful flexible scheduling in elementary school library media programs and what can be done to improve the chances of flexible scheduling becoming a reality for all elementary schools.

Collection of Data

Surveys included in this study were completed by elementary library media specialists who have implemented and continue to maintain flexibly scheduled library media programs across the United States and Canada. Respondents were part of a non-probability sampling, therefore, the findings reported from this study are characteristic of this sample only.

Data collected from the surveys was tallied and presented as percentages of the total number of respondents included in the study. The total number of respondents in the study was twenty-seven or seventy-three percent.

Findings

Background information gathered about those responding to the survey included the number of years of experience each had as a library media specialist, the number of students and teachers, the grade levels, and the size of the library media staff in each building.

The number of years of experience for library media specialists ranged from two to twenty-four years. The median was eight years of experience. Seventy-four percent of the library media specialists had thirteen or fewer years of experience.

Student population per building ranged from 300 to 850 students. The average student population per building was 554 students; the median was 550. Forty-six percent of the elementary schools ranged from 500 to to 650 students. Thirty-one percent had fewer than 500 students; twenty-three percent had more than 650 students.

The number of teachers per building ranged from twelve to forty-two teachers. The average number of teachers per building was twenty-nine; the median was thirty-two.

Grade Levels

Over ninety percent of the elementary buildings included grades kindergarten through fifth grade. Slightly more than half included sixth grade. Less than twenty percent included

pre-kindergarten and transitional first grade as other grade levels. (Table 1)

Grade levels involved in flexible scheduling varied. One hundred percent of the upper elementary grades (fourth, fifth, and sixth) were involved in flexible scheduling. The lower elementary grades (kindergarten, first, second, and third) were less involved. As the grade levels increased, so did participation in flexible scheduling. (Table 1)

Table 1

Grade Levels and Flexible Scheduling

Grade levels per building			Grades involved in flexible scheduling		
	Responses	Percent		Responses	Percent
K	26	96%	K	12	46%
1	27	100%	1	19	70%
2	27	100%	2	19	70%
3	27	100%	3	23	85%
4	26	96%	4	26	100%
5	25	93%	5	25	100%
6	14	52%	6	14	100%
Other*	5	19%	Other*	3	60%

* pre-kindergarten, transitional first grade, seventh grade

Staff

The most common combination of library media staff (about one-third of those responding) included one full time library media specialist and one full time clerical aide. The least common combination was a part time library media specialist and a full time clerical aide. Two respondents included others as part of the paid library media staff. The title of one position was computer lab assistant; the title of the other position was library technician. (Table 2).

Table 2

Library Media Professional and Clerical Staff

Professional and clerical staff	Responses	Percent	Other staff
Full time LMS + full time clerical	9	33%	comp lab assist (1)
Full time LMS + part time clerical	6	22%	library tech (1)
Full time LMS + no clerical	7	26%	
Part time LMS + full time clerical	1	4%	
Part time LMS + part time clerical	4	15%	

Volunteers were a large part of the library media staff. Seventy-four percent of all respondents reported having volunteer workers. Ninety-five percent of the respondents who had volunteer

workers used adult volunteers. Ninety-five percent of the adults were parents; five percent were senior citizens. Forty-five percent of the respondents who had volunteer workers used both adult and student volunteers. The percent of volunteer use increased as the combination of professional and clerical positions decreased. (Table 3).

Table 3

Size of Library Media Staff and Use of Volunteers

Size of library media staff	Use of volunteers
Full time LMS + full time clerical	67%
Full time LMS + part time or no clerical	77%
Part time LMS + full time or part time clerical	80%

Scheduling

Respondents were asked to describe the structure of their library media schedule. Twenty-six percent reported having a completely flexible schedule while seventy-four percent reported a combination of flexible and fixed scheduling. (Table 4)

Table 4

Structure of Library Media Schedule

Structure of schedule	Responses	Percent
All time completely flexible, no set schedule	7	26%
A combination of flexible and fixed scheduling	20	74%

Class sessions with primary grades was reported by eighty-five percent of those with some fixed scheduling. Fifty percent indicated that book circulation was on a fixed schedule. Only fifteen percent indicated that they regularly scheduled planning time with teachers. (Table 5).

Table 5

Activities on Fixed Scheduling

Activities	Responses	Percent
Class sessions with primary grades	17	85%
Book circulation	10	50%
Cooperative planning time with teachers	3	15%
Administrative duties	3	15%
Other*	2	10%

* class sessions with grades 4-6, student supervision duties

Preliminary Planning/Research

Several questions were asked regarding implementing flexible scheduling. Respondents were asked what kind of planning and/or research was done prior to implementation. Over eighty percent reviewed professional literature, interviewed other library media specialists using flexible scheduling, and reviewed their library media programs' goals and objectives. Sixty-seven percent conducted an evaluation of current library media services and re-educated teachers and administrators about the library media program and the benefits of flexible scheduling. Two respondents added that they used the Information Power video as a tool for educating teachers and administrators. (Table 6)

Table 6

Preliminary Planning/Research Prior to Implementing Flexible Scheduling

Planning/Research activities	Responses	Percent
Review of professional literature	23	85%
Interviews with other LMS using flexible scheduling	22	82%
Review of LMP's goals, objectives, mission, philosophy	22	82%
Evaluation of current LM services	18	67%
Re-education of teachers and administrators	18	67%
Staff development sessions	12	45%
Evaluation of students' current information skills	9	33%
Public relations campaign	7	26%
Survey of teacher attitudes	6	22%
Information from graduate classes, college professors	6	22%
Other*	4	15%

* use of Information Power video, principal's directive, sessions at professional conferences

Challenges of Implementing

The vast majority of library media specialists indicated that gaining teacher support was the most challenging aspect of implementing flexible scheduling. Other notable challenges included scheduling activities at appropriate or desired times and providing the kind of services desired because of library media staff size.

Only fifteen percent indicated that gaining administrative support was a challenge. Several respondents commented that it was, in fact, the principal's initiative that was responsible for the change in scheduling. (Table 7)

Table 7

Most Challenging Aspects of Implementing Flexible Scheduling

Challenges	Responses	Percent
Gaining teacher support	20	74%
Scheduling activities at appropriate or desired times	9	33%
Providing the kind of services desired because of the current LM staff size	8	30%
Providing adequate staff development	6	22%
The physical structure of the LM center	6	22%
Finding a way to cover teacher prep time	5	19%
Gaining administrative support	4	15%
Providing the kind of services desired because of the current LM resources	3	11%
Other*	3	11%

* finding time to plan with teachers, had no challenges

Teacher Prep Time

Covering teacher prep time was considered a challenging aspect for only nineteen percent of the respondents. Nearly half of the respondents reported that finding a way to cover teacher prep time

did not apply to their situation when changing to flexible scheduling. For those respondents which indicated that they did have to find a way to cover teacher prep time, the most common response was extending class time with art, music, and physical education specialists. Just as many respondents, however, found other solutions not suggested in the survey. Some of those included: computer lab time added; hands-on science lab added; additional language arts teacher hired who travels from room to room on a rotating schedule; and a floating schedule of class sessions with primary grades. (Table 8)

Table 8

Covering Teacher Prep Time

Methods	Responses	Percent
Class time extended with specialists (art, music, P.E.)	5	19%
Length of student contact time changed	2	7%
Instructional aides or parent volunteers monitor students during certain activities	2	7%
Length of school day changed	0	0%
Did not apply to my situation	13	48%
Other*	5	19%

* computer lab, science lab, additional teachers hired, floating class sessions with primary grades

Challenges of Maintaining

A wide variety of responses were given when respondents were asked what were the most challenging aspects of maintaining their flexibly scheduled programs. Over eighty percent reported planning and evaluating lessons cooperatively with teachers as one of the most challenging aspects. Other notable responses included integrating information skills for all students at every grade level, providing adequate library media staff and resources, providing the kind of services desired by teachers and students, and maintaining teacher support. Only eleven percent found maintaining administrative support as a challenge. Several respondents commented that support from their administration has been invaluable. (Table 9)

Table 9

Most Challenging Aspects of Maintaining Flexible Scheduling

Challenges	Responses	Percent
Planning and evaluating lessons cooperatively with teachers	22	82%
Integrating information skills for all students at every grade level	11	41%
Providing adequate LM staff and resources	11	41%
Providing the kind of services desired by teachers and students	11	41%
Maintaining teacher support	10	37%
Scheduling activities at appropriate or desired times	8	30%
Continuing staff development	7	26%
Maintaining administrative support	3	11%
Other*	2	7%

* keeping a high profile, no challenges

Administrative Support

Several questions involved administrative support. Respondents were first asked how their administration supported flexible scheduling. Seventy-eight percent reported that their administration supported and encouraged successful results in curriculum integration and cooperative planning. Fifty-six percent indicated that their administration communicated effectively the purpose and benefits of flexible scheduling to the school community.

Fifty-two percent of the respondents reported that their administrators allowed time for staff development. (Table 10)

Respondents were then asked which of these same administrative actions they considered essential to implementing and maintaining a successful flexible program. Eighty-nine percent reported supporting and encouraging successful results in curriculum integration and cooperative planning as essential. Eighty-five percent reported allowing time for cooperative planning and communicating effectively the purpose and benefits of flexible scheduling to the school community as essential. Increasing the library media budget was reported as the least essential administrative action for implementing and maintaining flexible scheduling. (Table 10)

Comparing what administrators actually do to support flexible scheduling and what library media specialists reported administrators should do revealed several areas of considerable difference. The largest differences occurred in the following areas: including the use of library media resources and cooperative planning in teacher evaluations; allowing time for cooperative planning; stressing the use of library media resources and cooperative planning when hiring new teachers; and communicating effectively the purpose and benefits of flexible scheduling to the

school community. The smallest differences between what administrators actually do and what library media specialists considered essential for administrators to do in supporting flexible scheduling were indicated in the areas of allowing time for staff and curriculum development, supporting and encouraging successful results in curriculum integration and cooperative planning, and participating in library media activities. (Table 10)

Table 10

Administrative Support for Flexible Scheduling

Administrative support	Support considered essential		Support actually given		Difference in percentage
	Responses	Percent	Responses	Percent	Amount
Supporting, encouraging, recognizing successful results of curriculum integration and cooperative planning	24	89%	21	78%	11%
Allowing time for cooperative planning	23	85%	12	45%	40%
Communicating effectively the purpose and benefits of flexible scheduling to the school community	23	85%	15	56%	29%
Stressing the use of LM resources and cooperative planning when hiring new teachers	15	56%	6	22%	34%
Allowing time for staff development	14	52%	14	52%	0%
Including the use of LM resources and cooperative planning in teacher evaluations	14	52%	3	11%	41%
Allowing time for curriculum development	13	48%	10	37%	11%
Participating in LM activities	11	41%	9	33%	8%
Increasing LM staff	8	30%	3	11%	19%
Increasing LM budget	4	15%	0	0%	15%
Other*	0	0%	3	11%	11%

* allowed LMS to try flexible scheduling, arranged meetings between LMS and unhappy teachers, none of the above applied

Highest Priorities

Respondents were asked which aspects of maintaining a successful flexibly scheduled library media program deserved the highest priority. Respondents were instructed to choose only four of the nine possibilities listed. Eighty-nine percent reported that planning and evaluating lessons cooperatively with teachers was one of their highest priorities. Fifty-six percent indicated other high priorities to be integrating information skills for all students at every grade level and maintaining effective communication with administrators and teachers. Several respondents commented that all aspects listed were very important and that it was difficult to choose only four. Continuing staff development and systematically evaluating the library media program received the fewest responses. (Table 11)

Table 11

Highest Priorities for Maintaining Successful Flexible Scheduling

Highest priorities	Responses	Percent
Planning and evaluating lessons cooperatively with teachers	24	89%
Integrating information skills for all students at every grade level	15	56%
Maintaining effective communication with administrators and teachers	15	56%
Providing adequate LM staff and resources	13	48%
Scheduling activities at appropriate or desired times	12	45%
Providing the kind of services desired by teachers and students	12	45%
Maintaining a strong public relations campaign supporting the need and benefits of flexible scheduling	10	37%
Systematically evaluating the LM program, its staff, resources, and services	7	26%
Continuing staff development	5	19%
Other	0	0%

Promoting Flexible Scheduling and the Role of the Specialist

Respondents were asked to indicate which actions they felt would be most effective in furthering the cause of flexible scheduling and the role of the library media specialist in the future. Once again, respondents were instructed to choose only four of the eight possibilities. One hundred percent of the respondents reported that

integrating more library media use with classroom curriculum in teacher training programs at colleges and universities would be one of the most effective actions. Eighty-five percent indicated including more discussion of the role of the library media program in administrative training programs at colleges and universities; sixty-seven percent reported publishing more library media articles in professional journals read by administrators and teachers; and fifty-two percent indicated developing an informal network of library media specialists who share experiences about flexible scheduling and offer advice to others. Increasing professional research received the fewest responses. One respondent commented that gathering testimonials of teachers who strongly support flexible scheduling should be considered as another effective means for furthering the cause of flexible scheduling. (Table 12)

Table 12

Promoting Flexible Scheduling and the Role of the Library Media Specialist

Most effective means	Responses	Percent
Integrating more LM use with classroom curriculum in teacher training programs at colleges and universities	27	100%
Including more discussion of the role of the LM program in administrative training programs at colleges and universities	23	85%
Publishing more LM articles in professional journals read by administrators and teachers	18	67%
Developing an informal network of LM specialists who share experiences about flexible scheduling and offer advice to others	14	52%
Having professional organizations address the topic of flexible scheduling at regional, state, national meetings	8	30%
Developing an extensive public relations campaign	6	22%
Lobbying the legislature for more funds to improve LM programs	6	22%
Increasing professional research	4	15%
Other*	1	4%

* gathering testimonials of teachers who support flexible scheduling

Words of Advice

Respondents were asked to offer suggestions or words of advice to other elementary library media specialists wishing to implement flexible scheduling. Comments were categorized as presented in Table 13. Most recommendations referred to educating and gaining the support of administrators and teachers regarding the

philosophy behind a flexibly scheduled library media program, how it works, and how it benefits the educational process. Recommendations also stressed what library media specialists should expect to do in order to increase teacher involvement and cooperation and develop positive working relationships with teachers. Others commented that library media specialists should be prepared for the fact that it would take several years to successfully develop a flexibly scheduled library media program. (Table 13)

Table 13

Words of Advice to Other Library Media Specialists Wishing to Implement Flexible Scheduling

Words of advice	Responses	Percent
Meet teachers more than half way, encourage involvement, offer suggestions, offer extras, be indispensable	16	59%
Educate administrators and teachers about the benefits and "how to's" of flexible scheduling	12	45%
Gain administrative support	11	41%
Realize it will take time, have a 3-5 year plan	11	41%
Regular planning/communication with teachers essential, develop a trusting working rapport	7	26%
Prepare yourself (read research, visit other schools)	5	19%
Be committed to the philosophy of flexible scheduling, have a vision	5	19%
Be proactive, "Go for it!"	4	15%
Start with a few teachers and build from there, let the word spread	3	11%
Evaluate program each year	2	7%
Solicit for more help from volunteers, additional staff	1	4%

Summary

The library media specialists participating in this study have been in the field of library media education for a relatively short period of time. Half have been library media specialists for eight or fewer years. Seventy-four percent have been library media specialists for thirteen or fewer years.

The average elementary building in which respondents worked had 554 students and twenty-nine teachers. Slightly more than half of the elementary buildings had a full time library media professional and a full or part time clerical aide. Parents made up the majority of the volunteer workers.

Seventy-four percent of all library media programs involved a combination of fixed and flexible scheduling. The majority of fixed scheduling was designed to accommodate class sessions with primary grades and book circulation. This explained why one hundred percent of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades were involved in flexible scheduling and why kindergarten, first, second, and third grades were less involved.

Common strategies for the preliminary planning stage of implementing flexible scheduling involved reading professional literature and making informal contacts with other library media specialists using flexible scheduling. Finding a way to cover teacher

prep time did not apply to almost half of the respondents. Gaining teacher support was the most challenging aspect of implementation, while cooperative planning with teachers was the most challenging aspect of maintaining flexible scheduling.

Respondents were basically satisfied with administrative encouragement of their efforts but indicated that they could be more active in providing the time needed for cooperative planning and stressing library media use with teachers.

Respondents reported that cooperative planning, integrating skills for all students, and maintaining communication with teachers and administrators were their highest priorities.

Respondents indicated that more should be done to educate teachers and administrators about the role of the library media program in education in their training programs at colleges and universities. This same need to educate teachers and administrators and gain their support for the library media program was reflected in their words of advice to other library media specialists wishing to implement flexible scheduling.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations about the need for flexible scheduling in elementary school library media programs are based on research that information skills are learned best when integrated in a meaningful way with classroom curriculum. Information skills develop as a natural part of learning. Flexible scheduling allows the library media specialist and classroom teachers to work together to create optimal learning experiences for students by making a direct connection between learning information skills and satisfying the students' need to know. Information skills become a means to an end, not an end in themselves.

Flexible scheduling in elementary school library media programs has been slow in materializing. Developing a flexibly scheduled library media program takes dedication and true commitment from those involved in implementing and maintaining such a program. Library media specialists who have taken on the challenge of flexible scheduling are now beginning to share their experiences with others through professional literature and informal

discussions. Their experiences are laying the groundwork for other library media specialists who wish to follow.

The purpose of this study was to determine what factors are commonly involved in implementing and maintaining successful flexible scheduling in elementary school library media programs and what can be done to improve the chances of flexible scheduling becoming a reality for all elementary schools.

Summary

Several common factors were identified throughout the literature as essential to the success of implementing and maintaining flexible scheduling. First of all, it is the library media specialist who must assume the leadership role in the development of a flexibly scheduled program. He/She must not only be committed to the philosophy behind a flexibly scheduled program, but must also be dedicated to the delivery of such a program. Commitment to the philosophy of flexible scheduling must also come from the administration. Their support is critical to giving the flexibly scheduled program a chance to get off the ground. Gaining and maintaining teacher support and involvement will determine if the program continues. Building positive working relationships and planning cooperatively with teachers are the library media specialist's highest priorities. Communication with administrators

and teachers is also considered essential. Only through the library media specialist's persistent efforts to share his/her vision of what flexible scheduling can bring to students' learning experiences, will the potential of such a program be realized.

Conclusions

The survey results revealed that indeed the factors discussed as essential by library media professionals in the literature were very much the same factors considered essential by the library media specialists involved in implementing and maintaining flexible scheduling in this study. Characteristics of flexibly scheduled programs were also very similar to those described in the literature. In some areas, however, actual practice did not coincide with the library media specialists' expectations.

Although respondents indicated that cooperative planning with teachers was their highest priority, cooperative planning was not listed as a regularly scheduled activity. One of several possibilities could account for this: (1) regular planning is done before or after the school day, therefore, may not have been considered part of the fixed schedule; (2) planning time is scheduled on an as need basis; or (3) planning is done spontaneously. If as few library media specialists as indicated (fifteen percent) actually have regularly scheduled planning time, that would also account for planning and evaluating

lessons with teachers being listed as their greatest challenge in maintaining flexible scheduling. Respondents indicated that gaining and maintaining administrative support has not been a challenge. However, it seems that more direction by library media specialists may be called for in order to achieve those aspects of administrative support that are lacking. Allowing time for cooperative planning with teachers had one of the largest differences between what administrators do and what library media specialists considered essential. As one respondent commented: "Often [administrators] don't know what to do to assist, so we have to tell them!"

Recommendations

Responses indicating what could be done to further the cause of flexibly scheduled library media programs and the role of the library media specialist also coincided with recommendations cited in the literature. Dugan (1988) and Veltze (1992) recognized the need for more attention given to the role of library media programs in teacher and administrative training programs at colleges and universities. Toor (1987) urged national associations which serve school librarians to help educate school principals and teacher organizations about the role of the library media specialist. Veltze also suggested publishing more library media articles in professional journals read by teachers and administrators.

The following recommendations for library media professionals are based on conclusions from this study and a review of the literature.

1. Library media professionals should voice their concerns and opinions to their professional associations demanding that more be done to inform teacher and administrative training programs at colleges and universities about the role of the library media program in education.

2. Library media professionals can begin to develop an organized, yet informal means of discussing flexible scheduling by becoming involved in Internet LISTSERVs such as LM_Net and MEMO-net which already exit to serve library media professionals and their concerns.

3. Library media professionals should consider publishing articles in educational journals read by teachers and administrators and also consider the opportunities to speak at association meetings and conferences which serve teachers and administrators.

4. Library media specialists wishing to implement flexible scheduling in their programs should (a) have a vision of what they want to accomplish, (b) read the research, (c) visit other schools with flexibly scheduled programs, (d) educate and gain the support of their administration and teachers, (e) insist on quality time for

cooperative planning with teachers, (f) keep communication efforts positive and effective, and (g) continually acknowledge their success and the benefits that result from a flexibly scheduled library media program.

The following recommendations for colleges of education are also based on conclusions from this study and a review of the literature.

1. Teacher educators should regularly integrate information skills and library media resources when demonstrating teaching practices and developing curriculum-related experiences for students.

2. Teacher and administrative educators should discuss the importance of integrating library media resources and information skills throughout the curriculum. Curriculum integration and cooperative planning are essential to developing optimal learning experiences for students.

3. Teacher and administrative educators should strongly advise the use of library media resources and technology and the integration of information skills in the expectations of hiring new teachers and in the evaluations of practicing teachers.

4. The college departments of Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Administration, and Library Media Education should

develop integrated classes and/or learning experiences for students which would demonstrate practices being discussed. Suggestions include library media professionals as guest speakers, field trips to local school library media centers, on-site demonstrations of curriculum integration using cooperative planning and teaching methods, cooperative teams consisting of college instructors, classroom teachers, library media professionals, and building principals that supervise student teachers and administrative interns.

Recommendations for further research include conducting a similar study with a much larger sample. Other means of locating elementary school library media specialists who have implemented and continue to maintain flexible scheduling would have to be used. Possibilities include notices posted in professional library media journals and announcements made at library media association meetings and conferences.

Two areas of particular interest to this author that might be considered for more extensive research are the factors involved in developing successful strategies for cooperative planning and staff development necessary for a flexibly scheduled program to be implemented.

Finally, further research is also recommended to investigate current practices, knowledge, and attitudes of library media integration with school curriculum in teacher and administrative training programs in the colleges of education across the United States and Canada.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

RR 2 Box 180
Adams, MN 55909
April 22, 1994

Dear Library Media Specialist,

I am currently working on a graduate paper for my master's degree in library media education under the advisement of Fran McDonald at Mankato State University, Mankato, MN. My study involves a characterization of the factors involved in successfully implementing and maintaining flexible scheduling in elementary school library media programs. Because of your visionary efforts to make flexible scheduling a reality in your program, professionals like you have broken ground for other library media specialists wanting to implement flexible scheduling in their programs. Your willingness to share your knowledge and experiences with others can only increase the chances of flexible scheduling becoming a reality for everyone.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me by May 7, 1994, in the self-addressed, stamped envelope so that the process of sharing can begin. A summary of the results will be posted over LM_NET and MEMO-net via Internet this summer and submitted for publication in Minnesota Media this fall.

Please note: Should you happen to be a LMS for more than one elementary building, please complete the survey with reference to only one of your buildings. You may further explain your situation in question 6 of the survey.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Oswald
MSU graduate student

APPENDIX B

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING IN THE LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

A QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How many years have you been a library media specialist? _____

2. Number of students in your building: _____

3. Number of teachers: _____

4. Grade levels in your building:
__ K, __ 1, __ 2, __ 3, __ 4, __ 5, __ 6, __ other_____

5. Grades involved in flexible scheduling:
__ K, __ 1, __ 2, __ 3, __ 4, __ 5, __ 6, __other_____

6. Size of LM staff in your building:

Total staff:	How many?
_____ LM professionals	__ full time, __ part time, __ other_____
_____ clerical aides	__ full time, __ part time, __ other_____
_____ volunteers	__ students, __ parents, __ other_____
_____ others_____	

Comments:

7. Describe the structure of your library media schedule. (check one)

_____ all time completely flexible, no set schedule
_____ a combination of flexible and fixed scheduling*

(check all activites on fixed time)*
_____ cooperative planning sessions with teachers
_____ book circulation
_____ class sessions with primary grades
_____ administrative duties
_____ other _____

Comments:

8. What preliminary planning and/or research was done when deciding to implement flexible scheduling? (check all that apply)

_____ review of professional literature
_____ interviews with other library media specialists using flexible scheduling
_____ information from graduate classes, college professors
_____ review of the LM program's goals, objectives, mission, and philosophy
_____ evaluation of current LM services
_____ evaluation of students' current information skills
_____ survey of teacher attitudes
_____ re-education of teachers and administration
_____ staff development sessions
_____ public relations campaign
_____ other _____

Comments:

9. What were the most challenging aspects of implementing a flexibly scheduled LM program? (check all that apply)

_____ gaining administrative support
_____ gaining teacher support
_____ finding a way to cover teacher prep time
_____ providing adequate staff development
_____ providing the kind of services desired because of the current LM staff size
_____ providing the kind of services desired because of the current LM resources
_____ scheduling activities at appropriate or desired times
_____ the physical structure of the LM center
_____ other _____

Comments: (You may also use this space to describe what was done to meet those challenges.)

10. Specifically, what was done to cover teacher prep time? (check all that apply)

_____ class time extended with specialists (art, music, P.E.)
_____ length of school day changed
_____ length of student contact time changed
_____ instructional aides or parent volunteers monitor students during certain activities
_____ did not apply to my situation
_____ other _____

Comments:

11. What are the most challenging aspects of maintaining a flexibly scheduled LM program? (check all that apply)

_____ maintaining administrative support
_____ maintaining teacher support
_____ planning and evaluating lessons cooperatively with teachers
_____ integrating information skills for all students at every grade level
_____ providing adequate LM staff and resources
_____ providing the kind of services desired by teachers and students
_____ scheduling activities at appropriate or desired times
_____ continuing staff development
_____ other _____

Comments: (You may also use this space to describe what you are doing to meet those challenges.)

12. In what ways has your administration supported flexible scheduling? (check all that apply)

_____ allows time for staff development
_____ allows time for cooperative planning
_____ allows time for curriculum development
_____ increased LM staff
_____ increased LM budget
_____ communicates effectively the purpose and benefits of flexible scheduling to the school community
_____ supports, encourages, recognizes successful results of curriculum integration and cooperative planning
_____ includes use of LM resources and cooperative planning in teacher evaluations
_____ stresses use of LM resources and cooperative planning when hiring new teachers
_____ participates in LM activities
_____ other _____

Comments:

13. What administrative actions do you feel are essential to implementing and maintaining a successful flexible program? (check all that apply)

_____ allowing time for staff development
_____ allowing time for cooperative planning
_____ allowing time for curriculum development
_____ increasing LM staff
_____ increasing LM budget
_____ communicating effectively the purpose and benefits of flexible scheduling to the school community
_____ supporting, encouraging, recognizing successful results of curriculum integration and cooperative planning
_____ including use of LM resources and cooperative planning in teacher evaluations
_____ stressing use of LM resources and cooperative planning when hiring new teachers
_____ participating in LM activities
_____ other _____

Comments:

14. Along with continued administrative and teacher support, which four of the following do you feel deserve the highest priority in order to successfully maintain a flexibly scheduled library media program?

_____ planning and evaluating lessons cooperatively with teachers
_____ integrating information skills for all students at every grade level
_____ scheduling activities at appropriate or desired times
_____ providing the kind of services desired by teachers and students
_____ maintaining a strong public relations campaign supporting the need and benefits of flexible scheduling
_____ maintaining effective communication with administrators and teachers
_____ continuing staff development
_____ providing adequate LM staff and resources
_____ systematically evaluating the LM program, its staff, resources, and services
_____ other _____

Comments:

15. Choose four of the following which you feel would be most effective in furthering the cause of flexible scheduling and the role of the LM specialist in the future?

_____ integrating more LM use with classroom curriculum in teacher training programs at colleges and universities
_____ including more discussion of the role of the LM program in administrative training programs at colleges and universities
_____ having professional organizations address the topic of flexible scheduling at more regional, state, and national meetings
_____ developing an informal network of LM specialists who share experiences about flexible scheduling and offer advice to others
_____ increasing professional research
_____ publishing more LM articles in professional journals read by administrators and teachers
_____ developing an extensive public relations campaign
_____ lobbying the legislature for more funds to improve LM programs
_____ other _____

Comments:

16. What suggestions or words of advice would you give other elementary library media specialists wishing to implement flexible scheduling?

return to: Marilyn Oswald
RR 2 Box 180
Adams, MN 55909

APPENDIX C

SURVEY COMMENTS

"Be committed to the philosophy of flexible scheduling."

"Have a vision--know where you're going and why."

"Read the research. Share it with your principal and staff members who will embrace change."

"Gather testimonials from classroom teachers who value the flexible time table."

"You have to be a part of the total school--a team member--before teachers are willing to trust you and go along with new plans."

"Do not assume teachers understand the basis of flexible scheduling."

"Patience and persistence . . . Last spring was a very difficult transition. I basically had to defend my role in open meetings where people were rude and disrespectful . . . but everything this year has made it worthwhile. The children's experiences have been so much more appropriate and linked to [the] classroom--they are able to use the center at any and all appropriate times . . . all the anger has subsided--next year will be even better."

"Flexible scheduling is something you 'do' whole-heartedly, then find solutions to problems that crop up."

"The true test of the program is the enthusiasm of the child for learning in the library."

"Until all teachers regard the library media specialist as a master teacher, it is tricky helping them plan units without seeming 'bossy'. Discretion is mandatory!"

"I could not maintain flexible scheduling without my weekly meetings with the teachers. . . . This is to me the single most important aspect of maintaining a flexible program."

"My principal is VERY supportive and this is a MAJOR key to successful flexible scheduling."

"The administrator[s] must support you in change. [They] can't make the change. Often, they don't know what to do to assist, so we have to tell them!"

"Communication--both ways--is VITAL and face-to-face communication is far superior to the written word."

"Realize you won't be an overnight success."

"Get started!"

APPENDIX D

BUILDING A CASE FOR FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING: STATEMENTS FROM LIBRARY MEDIA PROFESSIONALS

Information is exploding. The amount of information doubles every two to three years. Many things taught today will be dated or obsolete in a few years. Curriculum areas such as science and social studies change too fast for textbooks to stay current. Often textbooks are obsolete by the time they are printed. Learning is no longer static. Memorization of facts will not sustain us or our children in the future. (Dobrot & McCawley, 1992, pp. 9-10, 13)

The philosophical basis for the fully integrated library program is grounded in the need to change two aspects of our approach to education. First, today's education requires that students become equipped to find, evaluate, and use a rapidly growing and changing body of information. To achieve this, instructional emphasis must shift from mastery of content to mastery of the process of locating, interpreting, and using new information. Second, a process must not be introduced as an abstract concept. Instead a process must be introduced through concrete application and then expanded to the abstract. Students must first find information that meets their need to know about a specific topic. After using information-gathering skills in several concrete projects, students will be able to generalize the process and apply it to other areas of learning. (Dobrot & McCawley, 1992, p. 5)

As school budgets continue to be cut, it is not logical to cut the library budget. The library is the one resource in the school that is available to everyone. Because all students can use all library materials, the dollars spent per student in library resources are more economical and beneficial than dollars spent buying duplicated materials for every classroom. (Dobrot & McCawley, 1992, p.14)

What would happen if public or university libraries were only available to patrons on an allotted one day per week schedule? (Dobrot & McCawley, 1992, p. 14)

The library media specialist can help teachers break out of the 2 x 4 mold (two covers of the textbook and four walls of the classroom) to encompass the resources available in the school library and beyond. The library becomes a classroom for everyone. (Dobrot & McCawley, 1992, p. 14)

The library media specialist is different than classroom teachers or other content specialists. Teachers and content specialists teach subject matter, whereas the library media specialist teaches skills. In order to teach skills, they must be attached to a subject. This is why cooperative planning/teaching are so important. (Burton, 1989, p. 41)

Fixed scheduling deprives students and teachers of uninhibited use of library media resources, ignores the unique contributions the library media specialist can make to the educational team, and ties up a very expensive part of the school's investment. (Buchanan, 1991, p. 3)

Library media specialists should not be considered special teachers with a separate curriculum to teach. Instead, they should be viewed as the resource specialist who can help the classroom teacher select appropriate instructional materials for the students, and as a partner with each teacher in helping students develop information access skills and a love of reading and learning. (Buchanan, 1991, p.135)

Students need to see their teachers in the library and using the library. Teachers need to show that it is important to education. Many students come from homes of non-library users. Many do not have books or other reading materials at home. How can these students be helped to see the relevance of library resources to their world? (Dobrot & McCawley, 1992, p. 18)

Students need to make concrete connections between libraries and their need to know. When children ask questions, they need to know that the library is one place where they may find the answers. (Dobrot & McCawley, 1992, pp. 9-10, 13)

A curriculum integrated library media program is designed to allow the library media specialist to teach library skills, information, resources, library operations, and all kinds of knowledge in conjunction with the classroom teacher. It is a philosophy that allows teachers and library media specialist to make decisions about when, how, and where to develop the curriculum. To fulfill the school's educational goals and objectives, students and teachers are allowed to use the library media program at the point of need. Flexible scheduling is essential for curriculum integrated success. Without flexible scheduling, curriculum integration does not work as well. A flexible schedule allows the teacher and library media specialist to use the library at the most appropriate and relevant time for optimum learning. A unit or lesson can be planned by the teacher and library media specialist so that library skills and services will match the assignments, activities, or learning experiences. . . . The authors believe that a true curriculum integrated library media program cannot be achieved without having a flexible schedule. . . . Finally, recent research indicates that there is a more positive attitude by students toward the curriculum integrated library media program than a traditional library media program (Kreiser, 1991). The same research also suggests that there is a more positive attitude toward reading with a curriculum integrated library media program. (Kreiser & Horton, 1992, pp. 316-317)

APPENDIX E

"INTEGRATE YOUR LIBRARY" POSTER

EMPOWER STUDENTS TO BECOME LIFELONG LEARNERS

I ncorporate the library program into major units of study.

N urture students' abilities to learn independently by

T eaching information skills at the point of need.

E xpand units to include library resources.

G ratify immediate need to know in an accessible library.

R ely on one another's special knowledge and skills by

A rranging frequent planning and sharing sessions.

T ie the library program to educational goals by

E ncouraging and promoting higher-level thinking in:

YOUR LIBRARY

Nancy L. Dobrot and Rosemary McCawley. Beyond Flexible Scheduling: A Workshop Guide. Castle Rock, CO: Hi Willow, 1992.